

Message Text

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TAGS: AORG, PFOR, UR, US, UN

SUBJECT: SOVIET VIEWS ON PARKING

REF: USUN 2495

1. MISOFFS MET JULY 31 WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES SMIRNOV AND FEDEROV TO UNDERTAKE INFORMAL DIALOGUE ON PARKING PROBLEMS AFFECTING UN MISSIONS PER REFTTEL. US MISOFFS GAVE SOVIET REPS STRONG ARGUMENTATION FOR NEED TO IMPROVE PARKING SITUATION IN NEW YORK CITY AND IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO DIPLOMATS ADHERING TO LOCAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. DISCUSSION WAS CONSTRUCTIVE AND IN GOOD HUMOR AND USUN BELIEVES THAT WE MAY HAVE MADE SOME SLIGHT PROGRESS WITH SOVIETS ON THIS QUESTION. WITHOUT MAKING ANY PROMISES WE AGREED TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING A FEW ADDITIONAL PARKING PLACES FOR SOVIET MISSION, POINTING OUT THAT WE HAD ALREADY REQUESTED TRAFFIC COMMISSIONER KARAGHEUZOFF TO SEE IF SOME FURTHER SPACES COULD BE ALLOCATED FOR DIPLOMATIC PARKING IN GENERAL. WE ALSO INFORMED SOVIETS THAT WE HOPED TO INSTITUTE NEW PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING PARKING TICKETS TO ELIMINATE SOME OF THE MORE BURDENSOME PAPERWORK ASPECTS OF CURRENT SYSTEM.

2. SMIRNOV PROMISED THAT SOVIET MISSION WOULD ENDEAVOR

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TO COMPLY WITH PARKING REGULATIONS ALTHOUGH HE MADE

DISTINCTION BETWEEN ILLEGAL PARKING BY PARKING METERS (SOVIETS REFUSE TO FEED METERS) AND PARKING ELSEWHERE E.G., BY FIRE HYDRANTS, BUS STOPS, CROSSWALKS, ETC. WHEN INFORMED THAT USUN HOPED TO INSTITUTE SYSTEM WHEREBY EACH MISSION WOULD RECEIVE MONTHLY COMPUTER RUNOFF OF VIOLATIONS FOR ALL VEHICLES DRIVEN BY DIPLOMATS OF EACH MISSION, SMIRNOV STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT IF ANY VIOLATIONS WERE ATTRIBUTED TO SOVIET DIPLOMATS FOR PARKING IN FRONT OF FIRE HYDRANTS, FOR EXAMPLE, OR OTHER "SERIOUS" PARKING OFFENCES, ONE WARNING WOULD BE SUFFICIENT. HIS MISSION WOULD TAKE STRICT MEASURES AGAINST SOVIET MISSION VIOLATOR IN QUESTION. HE ALSO APPEARED TO BACK OFF SLIGHTLY FROM HIS CONTENTION THAT TICKETING OF DPL CARS WAS "ILLEGAL".

3. MEETING CONCLUDED WITH MUTUAL EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT GREATER UNDERSTANDING WOULD BE SHOWN BY DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND NEW YORK CITY AUTHORITIES IN IMPROVING OVERALL PARKING SITUATION AS IT AFFECTS DIPLOMATS.

4. COMMENT: SMIRNOV WHO IS SENIOR MISSION LEGAL COUNSELOR APPEARS TO APPRECIATE WEAKNESS SOVIET PARKING PRACTICES AND THEIR LEGAL VIEWS ON PARKING. PERHAPS THIS IS BECAUSE MISSION REALIZES CITY AND USUN REMAIN FIRM AND THAT CONTINUED BLATANT PARKING PRACTICES WILL INCREASINGLY EMBARRASS SOVIETS HERE IN NYC. BY COMPARISON WITH TONE OF EARLIER DEMARCHE (REFTEL) BOTH SMIRNOV AND FEDEROV ARE TAKING MUCH MORE CONSIDERED APPROACH. THIS MAY NOT, HOWEVER, BE REFLECTED IN PUBLIC STANCE THEY TAKE IN HOST COUNTRY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETINGS. WE WILL CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS AMELIORATE THIS CONTENTIOUS LONG-RANGE PROBLEM.
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